

December 4, 2003

Nancy L. Bowen, M.D., M.P.H.
1700 Pacific Highway, Rm. 311
Mail Stop P-511-E
San Diego, CA 92101

Dear Dr. Bowen:

I am writing to you in my capacity as Chair of the City of San Diego's Medical Marijuana Task Force. Before leaving office, Governor Davis signed into law California Senate Bill 420: Medical Marijuana Implementation. The new law requires every county health department (or its designee) to issue identification cards to patients who have a doctor's recommendation to use medical marijuana.

In May of 2001 the San Diego City Council voted to form an all volunteer Task Force to determine the most efficient way to regulate the use of medical cannabis. This fall the City Council approved a Task Force recommendation to implement a "Medical Cannabis Verification Card" system. The Task Force was on the verge of implementing the City's identification card program when Governor Davis signed the legislation mandating that local health departments implement a very similar card program. We are now in an official quandary.

I am writing to you with two specific requests:

1. The Task Force has spent over two years working on the medical marijuana issue. Our experience should prove helpful to the County as it struggles to fulfill the mandate of SB 420. I would encourage someone from HHSA to attend the next Task Force meeting so that the County does not have to reinvent the wheel. Our next meeting is January 16th at 12 noon.
2. When the County assembles a team to begin work on this issue I believe it would be important to include members of the City's Task Force. At least two members of the Task Force have offered to volunteer their time and would gladly participate.

I am not sure when the State Attorney General is going to issue an edict regarding a deadline for implementation of the statewide identification program—but it may be as early as this summer. I believe and hope that the City's Task Force can work hand in hand with the County in developing this new card program. I look forward to hearing from you or someone from your office. I can be reached at home at 619-692-0929.

Sincerely,

Jerry Meier, MPH
Chair
City of San Diego Medical Marijuana Task Force